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Stations shun pro-Amendment 2 ads

Shots of gay parades called too explicit

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Three Denver television stations are refusing to air commercials for the organization promoting Amendment 2, which would ban civil rights protection for gays,, saying the ads are in poor taste.

KWGN Channel 2, KCNC Channel 4 and KUSA Channel 9 — the only Denver stations approached so far by Colorado Springs-based Colorado for Family Values — have turned down the commercials.

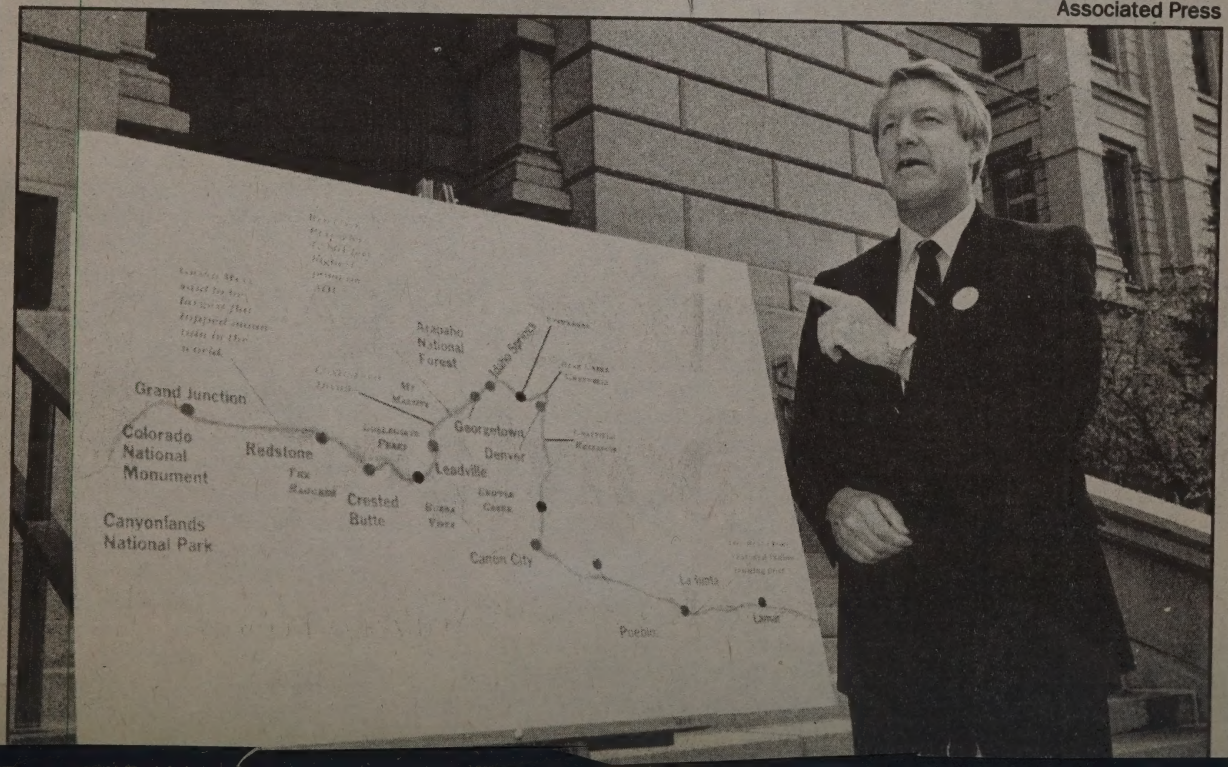
"It was pretty explicit footage. We just decided that they weren't suitable for air. And we are a family station," said Joe Michalski, local sales manager for KWGN. "Candidate ads, we have no choice in the matter. We can't screen them. We can't censor them. We can't run disclaimers. Amendments are different."

Colorado for Family Values spokesman Will Perkins said on Monday his group will take its campaign door to door. The campaign will involve volunteers distributing 800,000 tabloid newsletters urging a yes vote on Amendment 2. In addition, the group will broadcast ads on cable television channels in Denver and Fort Collins and television stations in the rest of the state, Perkins said.

If passed, Amendment 2 would prohibit laws banning discrimination based on sexual orientation and would repeal anti-discrimination ordinances in Denver, Boulder and Aspen.

Some of the commercials include footage from San Francisco's Gay Pride Parade. Some of the people are partially dressed or appear to be performing simulated sex. Colorado for Family Values blocked parts of some scenes with bars containing the word "censored."

Perkins said KCNC and KUSA also had refused to air the ads, produced by a Colorado company Perkins refused to name for fear of economic repercussions. But those stations will air 10-second spots of two minorities speaking for Amendment 2.

Perkins said he was disappointed the stations didn't accept the ads. "I really hope they will be responsible," he said.

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